

Top Software for Manufacturing Companies to Grow Sales in 2018



The world of industrial distribution and manufacturing often focuses on the development of new technologies that change how things are made, moved, and delivered globally.

These technologies have produced exciting results for businesses. Unfortunately, many sales and marketing teams, especially those from smaller companies with limited staff and resources, have been left behind in this revolution and continue to rely on the same outdated tools to grow their business.

But that's changing. In recent years, forward-thinking sales and marketing teams are beginning to revolutionize the industrial distribution and manufacturing space by using technology to deepen customer relationships and drive more sales. It's not just about using the latest laptop computer or smart mobile device. Innovative software can help your salespeople deepen their relationships with top accounts, improve communication amongst teams, and heighten a team's overall efficiency. In fact, case studies show that choosing the right software for your team can increase your time-to-close new deals by nearly 50 percent, double your revenue and decrease your overall sales and marketing costs.

Here is a trusty road map for identifying the must-have software products. With these tools in tow, industrial sales teams can successfully start, build and grow the strongest customer relationships, allowing them to generate new and repeat business that is pivotal to their long-term success.

The background of the image is a photograph of an industrial facility, likely a refinery or chemical plant. It features a complex network of large, metallic pipes and structural steel beams. The lighting is bright, creating strong highlights and shadows. A semi-transparent blue rectangular overlay is positioned in the center of the image, serving as a background for the text.

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Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Software

It's common for many industrial distribution and manufacturing companies to keep track of accounts and sales on old-school spreadsheets and home-built systems.

For sales managers, these dual systems make it difficult to track the sales pipeline, are rarely accessible on multiple devices and come with the ever-present threat that information may, at best, be out of date, or at worst, be outright lost.

Fortunately, a cloud-based CRM solution can help you manage your leads and accounts, and maintain your deals pipeline. Keeping track of your accounts and following up on potential new business in a timely fashion are, more often than not, the key to being the one to win the deal. Even better, cloud-based solutions ensure that a team can access the data it needs on any device, anywhere. Additionally, companies can rest assured that information on your most valuable accounts won't get lost.

There is no shortage of options out there, many of which are quite good. The important things to keep in mind when shopping is the ease of use, the level of customizability and the cost. For the majority of companies, simple is preferable. The most important function of this software is to accurately capture account and deal information. Quite simply, the easier a CRM is to use, the faster sales staff will adopt it.

The background of the image is a blurred industrial scene, likely a factory or workshop. It features various mechanical parts, pipes, and structures. A significant number of bright orange and yellow sparks are visible, suggesting welding or grinding activities. A semi-transparent blue rectangular overlay is positioned in the center of the image, serving as a backdrop for the text.

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2 Email Tracking - Know What Happens After You Click Send

While many in sales still prefer to do business over the phone, there is no denying email is essential in a salesperson's toolkit.

Email can often feel like you're shouting into a bottomless pit, especially when you're in the early stages of business development. Thankfully, a number of email tracking software systems are designed with salespeople in mind.

The top industrial distribution and manufacturing companies use email tracking software to understand what happens after sales teams click send. Want to know when the best time to send your email is? Wondering if an executive on a key account has opened up your proposal, or shared it with other stakeholders in his or her company? With email tracking services, you can easily discover this information. Most email trackers will tell you if a prospect has opened an email, clicked on links or downloaded an attachment that has been shared.

There are a number of different options available in the market. Look for an option that integrates well with your existing email solution. Even better, choose a system that is fully integrated with your CRM.

The background image shows an industrial setting, possibly a factory or warehouse, with large metal structures and machinery. A prominent blue semi-transparent rectangular overlay covers the center of the image, serving as a background for the text. The text is white and reads: "Some studies show the e-signature software can boost the velocity of sales closing by 35%."

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Online (e-signature) Document Management

The delivery of quotes, proposals and contracts is a stressful experience in the sales business.

Preparing these documents can be a painstaking experience that takes precious time during the day when you could be actively selling. Additionally, it can often be unclear whether someone has received your document or has begun to review it. Finally, if your client objects to even the smallest detail listed in a traditional proposal, the whole document must be revised and reissued. Suffice to say, the whole process of getting contracts signed can be a real hassle that eats up days or weeks of time.

E-signature software is a critical element in helping a smart industrial distribution and manufacturing company accelerate sales processes and reclaim sales team's time. Some studies show the e-signature software can boost the velocity of sales closing by 35 percent. That's a huge time saver for most companies. Again, hone in on simplicity here. Some of the bigger players in the industry deliver features that most people don't need and shouldn't have to pay for. Choose the software that is intuitive and easy for your salespeople to learn and use.

About the author:

David is a problem-solver and an experienced B2B marketer who loves helping businesses grow. Prior to working in tech, David was a Teach For America corps member and math teacher in Colorado. In his free time, David is a training ride leader and fundraiser for AIDS/LifeCycle, and he enjoys camping, hiking, and trying new breweries. He lives in Seattle with his needy cat Figs.



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About PipelineDeals:

PipelineDeals is a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) platform, built to make professionals more productive. Using a suite of powerful features, we give teams the ability to organize and develop their customer relationships while offering unparalleled visibility into each stage of their sales pipeline.

